

### What They Do

Animal Technicians assist scientists who use laboratory and farm animals in biotechnology research or product testing. Animal Technicians feed, water, and examine laboratory animals for signs of illness, disease, or injury. Technicians help develop procedures for the care of laboratory animals. They are generally responsible for receiving new animals, transporting them, handling them, monitoring them, and keeping detailed records of the animals' health. They write reports, maintain research information, and perform clerical duties.

Animal Technicians help provide routine veterinary care for research animals before and after surgery. Animal Technicians prepare surgical areas, assist in veterinary care, administer anesthetics and medicine, take temperatures, help restrain animals and carry out preventative care. Technicians collect laboratory specimens such as blood, urine, and feces for testing. They may euthanize animals and dispose of the remains.

Animal Technicians maintain inventories of animal care supplies. Technicians also take care of laboratory equipment. They clean and disinfect cages and sterilize laboratory and surgical equipment by using cagewashers and autoclaves.

They may also obtain or breed the animals needed in laboratories.

*Animal Technicians in the biotech industry share characteristics of Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers. Detailed descriptions of these occupations may be found in the Occupational Information Network (O\*NET) at [online.onetcenter.org](http://online.onetcenter.org).*

Important skills, knowledge, and abilities include:

- ▶ Biology – Knowledge of plant and animal organisms, their tissues, cells, functions, interdependencies, and interactions with each other and the environment.
- ▶ Science – Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems..
- ▶ Active Listening – Giving full attention to what other people are saying, taking time to understand the points being made, asking questions as appropriate, and not interrupting at inappropriate times.
- ▶ Equipment Selection – Determining the kind of tools and equipment needed to do a job.
- ▶ Oral Comprehension – The ability to listen to and understand information and ideas presented through spoken words and sentences.
- ▶ Wrist-Finger Speed – The ability to make fast, simple, repeated movements of the fingers, hands, and wrists.

### Training/Requirements

- ▶ Most employers prefer certification in laboratory animal technology. (See **Additional Sources of Information**.)
- ▶ Three years experience working with laboratory animals. Less experience required with two-year or four-year college degree.

## Animal Technicians

# Biotechnology Careers

### What's the California Job Outlook?

While the Bureau of Labor Statistics does not collect data on Animal Technicians, the occupations listed below are found in the biotechnology industry and have similar duties. The California outlook and wage figures are drawn from all industries and represent occupations comparable to Animal Technicians.

Standard Occupational Classification	Estimated Number of Workers 2002	Estimated Number of Workers 2012	Average Annual Openings	2005 Wage Range (per hour)
<b>Veterinary Assistants and Laboratory Animal Caretakers</b>				
31-9096	6,600	7,500	210	\$8.80 to \$12.65

*These figures do not include self-employment.*

*Average annual openings include new jobs plus openings due to separations.*

*Source: [www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov](http://www.labormarketinfo.edd.ca.gov), Employment Projections by Occupation and OES Employment & Wages by Occupation, Labor Market Information Division, Employment Development Department.*

### Additional Sources of Information

American Association for Laboratory Animal Science  
(901) 754-8620  
[www.aalas.org](http://www.aalas.org)

Northern California Branch of the American Association for Laboratory Animal Science  
[www.ncbaalas.org](http://www.ncbaalas.org)

Association for the Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care  
(301) 231-5353  
[www.aaalac.org](http://www.aaalac.org)

Occupational Information Network (O\*NET)  
<http://online.onetcenter.org>